



STATE OF WISCONSIN
Department of Employee Trust Funds
David A. Stella
SECRETARY

801 W Badger Road
PO Box 7931
Madison WI 53707-7931

1-877-533-5020 (toll free)
Fax (608) 267-4549
<http://etf.wi.gov>

CORRESPONDENCE MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 9, 2010

TO: Budget and Operations Committee
Employee Trust Funds Board

FROM: Jean Gilding, Administrator
Division of Retirement Services

SUBJECT: Operations Update

This memorandum is for informational purposes only. No Committee action is required.

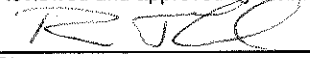
The following is an update on various operational activities within the Division of Retirement Services (DRS). Some of this information will be presented at the Joint Informational meeting.

Annuitant "Variable @ Core" Project

Each year the Department receives several hundred requests from annuitants seeking information related to the Variable portion of their monthly annuity. Specifically, the annuitant wants to know whether their current Variable payment portion is ahead or behind what the payment amount would have been had they not participated in the Variable Fund – the "Variable @ Core" balance. This calculation is manual as the historical data necessary to perform the calculation is not electronically stored. The new Benefit Payment System (BPS) has the capability to make this calculation for annuitants going forward, but only after the annuitant's "variable @ core" balance is brought up-to-date and entered into BPS.

Because of the significant impact variable participation can have on the annuitant's monthly payment, the increased number of requests from annuitants for their "variable @ core" values, and the inability of the Department to provide annuitants with this information in a timely fashion, the Department requested, and received, funding for four one-year project positions to bring "variable @ core" balances for all annuitants up-to-date. In January 2010, four contract staff were hired and the annuitant "Variable @ Core" Project was implemented.

Reviewed and approved by Robert J. Conlin, Deputy Secretary.


Signature

9/13/10
Date

Board	Mtg Date	Item #
BUD	9.16.10	2C

At the time the project was started there were approximately 32,000 annuitants participating in the Variable Fund. As of September 3, 2010, the manual "variable @ core" calculation has been completed for 21,652 annuitants, or about 65.5% of the total. At this time, the project is on schedule.

Service Delivery Strategies Update

At the June Budget and Operations Committee meeting, Shawn Smith informed you about our service delivery strategies. She discussed our four primary strategies to expand member and employer education and outreach. The following are some key actions that have taken place related to our strategic efforts.

Strategy #1: Dividing the state into nine service delivery districts.

- Staff has been assigned to all districts.
- Pilot group sessions are planned in each district for January 2011.
- Demographic data collection is underway.
- Discussions have begun to create an interactive education/outreach section on the ETF website.

Strategy #2: Closing the stand-alone Waukesha office.

- Developed and currently implementing a detailed communications plan.
- Coordinating the physical closure of the office with ETF facility staff and Department of Administration.

Strategy #3: Expanding education and outreach to members and employers by making more resource materials available online in multiple formats.

- Detail requests have been made and conversations started with budget and information technology staff to secure the tools necessary to expand our online presence.

Strategy #4: Conducting a comprehensive training needs assessment and educational outreach plan for WRS employers.

- Developing a survey tool which will be finalized and implemented in September.
- Recording employer requests for onsite visits for use in gauging demand for outreach services.
- Setting up listening sessions in all districts with plans to contact up to 100 employers within the next several weeks.

A more detailed memo discussing the current status of the Service Delivery Strategies is included in your Joint Informational meeting packet.

Movement of Staff to the Department of Revenue (DOR) Building

DRS will be moving more than half its staff to the DOR building in early October. Floor plans have been finalized and ETF facilities staff is currently monitoring the construction of the DOR work area. Staff that is moving to the DOR building is attending orientation sessions and have been given timelines for the actual move and instructions on preparing their work areas for the move.

In addition, DRS supervisors and managers are currently reviewing the floor plans for the Badger Road facility for purposes of making recommendations on necessary moves among the staff that will remain at Badger Road. We will focus on moving staff that have been placed outside their work unit areas due to the lack of space.

Position Recruitments in the Division of Retirement Services

The Division currently has 14 vacancies. About half of these vacancies will be filled in early October when we will be starting seven Trust Fund Specialists at the same time. Four of these are new positions that we received in the latest supplemental funding request and three are vacancies that have resulted from staff transfers within the Department. Three of the positions are allocated to the Contact Management Section (a.k.a. Call Center) and four are allocated to the Benefit Information Section.

We made the decision to fill all of these vacancies at once (in October) for several reasons. We want to make the most efficient use of our training staff. Rather than have several new staff all at different points in their training plans, we will be able to move the entire group through several training modules together. All of these specialists will provide benefit information to members and their initial training needs are similar. Also, all seven of these positions will be located at the Badger Road facility. We currently do not have enough space at the Badger Road building to accommodate this many positions. Thus, the start date has been set to occur after designated DRS staff is moved to the DOR building.

The remaining seven vacancies are in varying stages of recruitment. We expect additional vacancies moving forward because as new positions are allocated, or when current positions come open, it is not unusual for staff to transfer among the different areas of the Department. The positive side (and one that outweighs the negative) is that we are able to provide current staff with new challenges and retain their overall program and operations knowledge within the Department. However, the negative side is that additional recruitments must take place to fill the vacancies left by staff transfers.

Employer Communication Center System to be Upgraded

There are currently two call centers within the Department. The largest is the Call Center Anywhere (CCA) System within the Contact Management Section. Calls come into this system from members on an 800 or local line and are menu driven based on the needs of the caller. Calls that require an ETF representative are queued and answered by several call center staff in the order they come in. The calls coming through the CCA system are

documented into our Call and Service System (CallSS), a call tracking system that has been integrated with CCA.

In addition, a second, smaller call center exists within the Member and Employer Services Bureau (MESB) in which calls come in from employers on an 800 line and are subsequently routed to three or four specific telephone lines. If staff is unavailable at the designated telephone line, the employer is transferred to a voice mail message line for purposes of leaving their name and number for a call back.

Plans are currently underway to move the Employer Communication Center into the CCA system. This will allow employers to select among several options using the menu driven application and, like the member call center, will allow employer calls to be routed and queued for response by staff in the MESB. The implementation plan calls for this "merger" to take place within the next month.

Implementation of 2009 WI Act 319 – Uniform Power of Attorney

WI Act 319 dealing with Uniform Power of Attorney (POA) provisions became effective on September 1, 2010. In order to implement changes made in this legislation, ETF's Office of Policy, Privacy and Compliance analyzed the new provisions, and based on that analysis, DRS has implemented the necessary operational changes for handling POA documents.

The following is a list of the most significant changes to the statutory POA provisions:

- The Department may refuse to accept a POA (within 10 days) if it believes the POA does not give the agent the power to perform the requested transaction.
- A POA signed before September 1, 2010, is automatically non-durable unless the POA document specifically states that it is durable (remains in force if the principal becomes incapacitated).
- A POA signed on or after September 1, 2010, is automatically durable unless it specifically states that it is non-durable.
- As of September 1, 2010, if the agent is the spouse (or Chapter 770 domestic partner) the POA automatically terminates on the date that either party commences an action to terminate the marriage of Chapter 770 domestic partnership, unless the POA document specifies otherwise.
 - NOTE: Terminating a Chapter 40 domestic partnership does not terminate a POA.
- WI Act 319 restored the right of an agent to designate beneficiaries on behalf of the principal, as long as the POA document grants that authority.